

Two new foodplants for *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* L. (Lep.: Lymantridae) noted in east London, March/April 1995.

The winter and early spring of 1995 were spent gathering data for my MSc study on the factors responsible for the distribution of this infamous Lymantrid pest species in east London. Between January and March of this year, data collated on a total of 1,637 hibernacula found throughout the London borough of Newham, gave eighteen plant species suffering from the ravages of this insect. Nine of these plants were rosaceous. Two other shrubs are not known as hostplants for this moth; these being *Cornus sanguinea* and *Laurus* sp. Two small "webs" were seen on *Cornus* in late March in the Canning Town area, their presence being confirmed a month later. More surprisingly still, was the sight of a small "nest" on *Laurus*, again in Canning Town in March. An undersized hibernaculum might be regarded as an aberration, however, its status as an unrecorded larval foodplant should be taken much more seriously with the finding of several hundred larvae on a laurel hedge on 25th April, not so very far from the original record. A subsequent 76 fully-grown larvae, in addition to 14 "pupal webs" were also noted on this plant on 9th June in the same London area on Silvertown Way. *Laurus* is a member of a principally tropical family, the *Lauraceae*, none of which are known to be attacked by *E. chrysorrhoea*.

Of other unusual foodplants of this species, West (1992) mentions larvae being seen on *Buddleia davidii* at Barking in 1977. I have never noted the moth on this plant in east London despite the latter's abundance. Plant (1993) does not include either *Laurus* or *Cornus* in his resumé of Brown tail moth hostplants, neither do Gomez Bustillo (1978) nor Gomez de Aizpurua (1986). The latter author does mention another unfamiliar foodplant, that of *Ligustrum*. The only experience I have of this as a possible hostplant is an encounter with three females on privet in Granville, northern France, in July 1994. Although the females had already oviposited on the leaves, the neonates refused to eat it. I have certainly never come across it in London on privet. Carter (1984) cites *Forsythia*, which is in the same family, that of *Oleaceae*.

References

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